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4 December 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR: 

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SUBJECT : Draft of Paper - "The Information Needs of the Executive Director, NPIC, and the NPIC Management Information System."

REFERENCE : NPIC/D-333-70, dated 18 November 1970; Subject; As Above

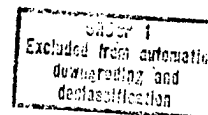
1. I have reviewed your draft paper entitled "The Information Needs of the Executive Director, NPIC, and the NPIC Management Information System." Although there are several observations and conclusions in the body of the paper that I consider either to be erroneous or with which I would disagree, I will limit my comments to those ideas expressed in paragraphs 4, 5 and 13, except for one initial, rather general, comment. This comment deals with what might be termed the basic orientation of the paper.

2. Implicit in your paper is the assumption that the Executive Director must use the MIS directly in the sense that he personally puts some tangible MIS output (printout, CRT, etc.) to use in managing the Center. Establishing such "direct" use as a measure of MIS utility could get us into trouble in deciding what to do with the MIS since, in my opinion, this assumption is invalid. Put very briefly, the type of management decisions made by a person with responsibilities analogous to those of the Executive Director rarely depend "directly," or even in large measure, upon MIS-type information. The explanation for this is simple, and I wouldn't presume to bore you with it.

3. With respect to paragraphs 4 and 5, Accomplishments in the 5-year plan, along with some other information which for the most part is already being produced and distributed monthly, are cited as the kind of information the Executive Director needs to assist him in managing the Center. I believe your desire to be specific may have led you to an invalid point -- that is, emphasizing accomplishments and other information, as specified in paras 4 and 5, with the information required to assist in managing an on-going organization. This obvious information is only a very small input to the total equation, and to determine the need for a management information system based on this criteria appears to me to be unrealistic.

4. In paragraph 13, you are correct in that some change is in order. The alternatives you present have all been considered a number of

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times in the past; my conclusion each time has been what is essentially your Alternative a.



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~~Chief, Planning, Programming & Budgeting Staff~~  
NPIC

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